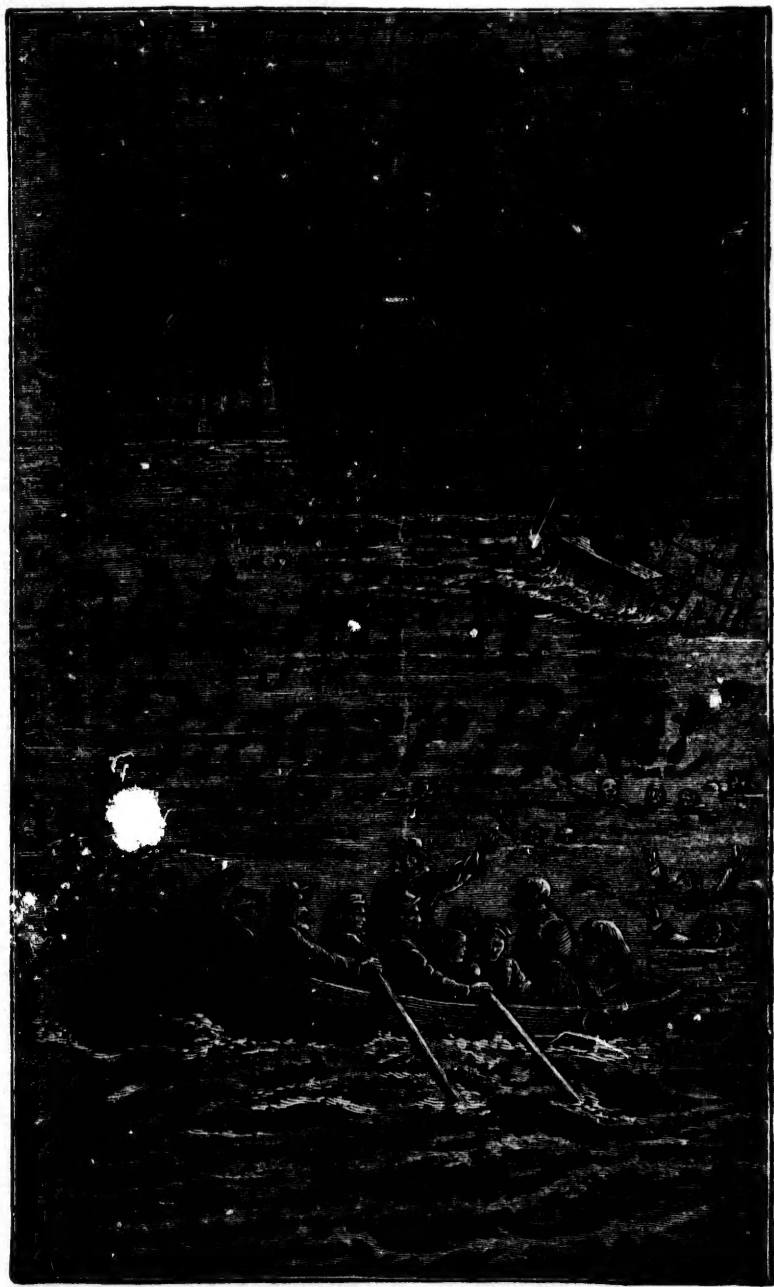
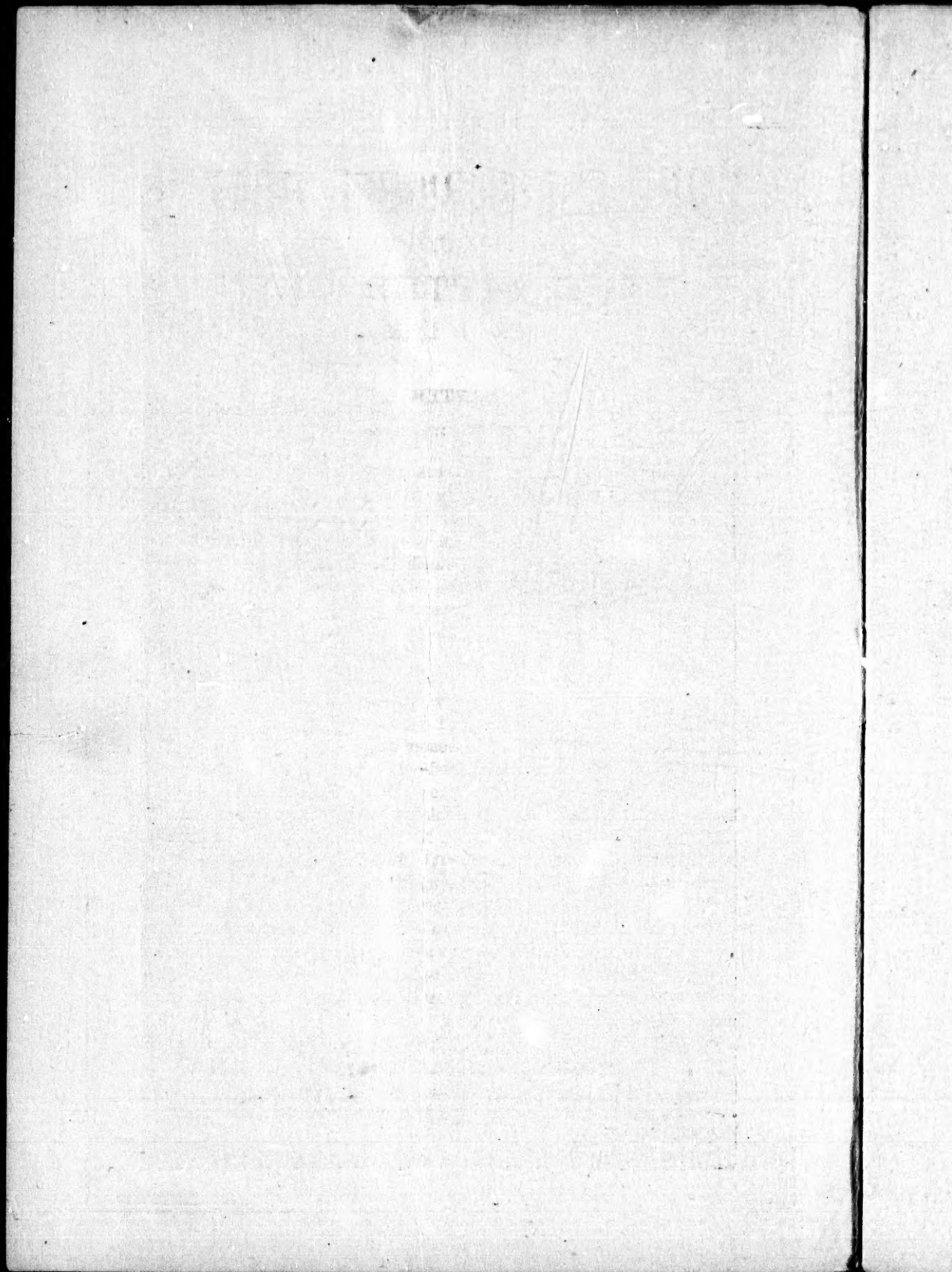


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"OH! FOR A BIGGER BOAT!"

A SEQUEL TO

"THE BITTER CRY."

By J. H. R.

CHAPTER I.

THE ROLLING RIVER.

IN the mellow glow of a beautiful September evening a pleasure steamer, heavily freighted with human lives, merrily returned to town. The Thames was never more attractive, and husbands and wives, lovers and little children, revelled in the fading sunshine. Lights began to flicker in the heavens, and in the rolling tide beneath. Lamps—white, red, and green—betoken the presence of passing vessels, for the pall of night suddenly fell, and the river was presently enveloped in murk and gloom.

Never a thought of danger—"all went well!" Songs on deck were taken up by merry-makers in the cabins. The paddles musically beat the wavelets, and each revolution of the engines brought the "*Princess Alice*" nearer home.

But False Point was reached—the spot where some years before two steamers came into dire collision. History was repeated; for there in the darkness the quick eye of the skipper detected the "*Bywell Castle*" advancing upon his own frail bark. Frantically gesticulating, he cried, "Look out! Where are you coming to?" Immediately the affrighted passengers saw their peril. The black hulk crushed upon them, the bows of the *Princess Alice* leaped high in the air, and in a few seconds there was nothing discernable but a host of dark specks on the surface of the water. Who can recall unmoved those struggles with death? Men, women, and children fighting against the common foe, and raising one fearful cry of despair!

"Lord Jesus save us!" broke from the whitened lips of terrified girls. That cry, perhaps, was heard by the solitary oarsman, who, among others, rested in the shadow of the river banks. Strong arms seized the sculls, and the boat flew through the spray to succour the dying.

What a scene! Six hundred souls struggling vainly with the

suffocating tide, which poisoned them as it swept them seawards. One boat, aye a dozen boats—what were they amongst so many? Stricken with pity the volunteer longed to save all; but his skiff held few. Away they floated, with wild despairing eyes, one by one, to be lost in the darkness. They rose and sank, and rose and sank again, and then with arms raised piteously for help—fathers, mothers, children—were for ever *gone*! Precious moments were fleeting: there was no time to pull to shore and back again. The little craft was crowded with the saved to sinking point, and then over the dreary waste of waters, the boatman, surrounded with the perishing, and hearing their piteous appeals to be saved, cried

"OH! FOR A BIGGER BOAT!"

The same cry has been re-echoed in London to-day. Its causes have stirred the national heart to the depths. Writers have described, and artists portrayed, the surging tide of sin which floods our great arterial thoroughfares. Among the principal of these is the Mile End Road, one of the finest and broadest of metropolitan highways. Time was when the present London Hospital stood in open fields, with a large mound or small hill beside it, whilst hedges and ditches and common land where cattle grazed stretched in its front. All that has changed; and changed too are the Tower Hamlets, once a cluster of smiling villages, starting from the Tower of London and extending along the River Thames for some miles into Essex. How London has grown until it covers about 70 square miles, is one of the wonders of the present century. It is now almost too vast for the West to realize the East, or for the North to feel any kindred with the South. Much has, however, been printed with a view to give some idea of the real character of East London, for it is this quarter which special commissioners and descriptive writers find most fruitful in suggestive themes.

Let any stranger take tram or 'bus through Aldgate, Whitechapel, and thence to Mile End and Bow, and he will meet some peculiar phases of our national life. Say the visit be made on a Saturday night. It will be noticed that the wide spaces bordering the broad roadway, and the ample pavements are tenanted by stalls of every description. This land is called the "Waste," and it serves the double purpose of providing ground for a regular pleasure fair and for an open-air market. Shops are numerous enough, but they are none too many. But it is a question whether these shopkeepers, who have to pay rent and taxes, would be able to get a living out of the odds and ends which form the stock and trade of the hucksters. Yet bear in mind the customers who frequent the Waste are to be reckoned by their hundreds of thousands, very many of them the poorest of the poor. How they

"OH! FOR A BIGGER BOAT!"

live, so far as food goes, may, on the one hand, be learned from a casual study of the "block ornaments," the pig's "trotters," the fried fish and stewed eels, the "baked 'taters," and the contents of the fruit shops; how they clothe may be seen by an inspection of the wardrobes fluttering in the open-air; how they furnish, from a glance or two at the cheap tables and chairs, and rolls of oilcloth put up for sale; how they seek cure for aches and pains, by watching the gaping crowds buying pills and lotions from quack doctors. Again, if one wishes to know whither the greater portion of the earnings of the match-makers, and needlewomen, and dock labourers drifts, let careful scrutiny be kept upon the doors of the establishment over which hangs the three golden balls, and upon the adjacent portals of the public-house. Later at night it may be convenient to station oneself outside the "penny shows" and music halls, for it is in the bar, the show, and the hall, that light, warmth, and society—however bad—is to be had for ready money. It is a more difficult task personally to discover the homes of these teeming masses. They are within a stone's throw; but not many people have the real courage to explore the fever lairs which house the outcast poor.

"Few," says the author of the "Bitter Cry of Outcast London," "have any conception of what these pestilential human rookeries are, where tens of thousands are crowded together amidst horrors which call to mind what we have heard of the middle passage of the slave ship. To get into them you have to penetrate courts reeking with poisonous and malodorous gases, arising from accumulations of sewage and refuse, scattered in all directions, and often flowing beneath your feet; courts, many of which the sun never penetrates, and which are never visited by a breath of fresh air and which rarely know the virtues of a drop of cleansing water. You have to ascend rotten staircases, which threaten to give way at every step, and which, in some cases, have already broken down, leaving gaps that imperil the lives and limbs of the unwary. You have to grope your way along dark and filthy passages swarming with vermin. Then, if you are not driven back by the intolerable stench, you may gain admittance to the dens in which these thousands of beings who belong, as much as you, to the race for whom Christ died, herd together. Have you pitied the poor creatures who sleep under railway arches, in carts or casks, or under any shelter which they find in the open air? You will see that they are to be envied in comparison with those whose lot it is to seek refuge here. Eight feet square—that is about the average size of many of these rooms. Walls and ceilings are black with the accretions of filth, which have gathered upon them through late years of neglect. It is exuding through cracks in the boards overhead; it is running down the walls it is every-

where. What goes by the name of a window is half of it stuffed with rags or boards to keep out wind and rain; the rest is so begrimed and obscured that scarcely any light can enter or anything be seen outside. Should you have ascended to the attic, where at least some approach to fresh air might be expected to enter from broken or open window, you look out upon the roofs and ledges of lower tenements, and discover that the sickly air which finds its way into the room, passes over the putrifying carcasses of dead cats or birds, or viler abominations still."

The horrors of overcrowding in these rotten and reeking tenement houses have been liberally exposed, and clouds of witnesses have testified to the fact that in every room a family, and often two, are huddled together. Sanitary inspectors and medical officers acknowledge that in the poorer districts it is difficult to keep the death-rate down. Fresh air in the minds of the ignorant is considered draught, which they dread; hence no attempt is made to ventilate the rooms, but rather to prevent the admission of the outer atmosphere, for chimneys are found stuffed up, and windows are kept closed. Again, it has been officially stated that some of the lower classes have a complete disregard for property belonging to others. Provide them with what sanitary conveniences the landlord may, he will discover that drains have been allowed to become stopped, the ball-cocks have been removed from the cisterns and sold for old iron, and the paper has been torn off the walls. Well may he despair! The problem does not find its solution in bricks and mortar; and sanitary committees, and vigilant inspection, and repressive measures, are only so many safeguards to prevent contagion spreading from the hovels of the poor to the mansions of the rich. None of these things strike at the root of the disease. "Improvement," cried Professor Huxley at the Mansion House, and Mr. Goschen echoed the affirmation, "Improvement must come from within!"

It is no new truth. It is one which has been known to man for ages, but we have neglected its full application. The author of the "Bitter Cry," who has done so much to re-awaken interest in the question, writes:

"Whilst we have been building our churches and solacing ourselves with our religion and dreaming that the millennium was coming, the poor have been growing poorer, the wretched more miserable, and the immoral more corrupt; the gulf has been daily widening which separates the lowest classes of the community from our churches and chapels, and from all decency and civilization." Lord Shaftesbury is constantly insisting upon the same facts, and he views the yawning gulf between rich and poor with apprehension yet, no man knows better than he the number of charitable agencies for improving the position of the masses, and

the real amount of support these agencies receive from those who have the means to give to them, and who have the most to fear from the breaking of the "surface crust of civilization," thin as it is!

From time to time schemes have been promoted on different lines and with diverse motives, to raise the moral condition of the dangerous and neglected classes, to give some relief to that deadly torpor in which they are involved by their dull, depressing, deadening surroundings. But here, in the Nineteenth Century, we are confronted with this fact. In East London, with its million of inhabitants, no social plan is in operation on any large scale, and with machinery commensurate with the admitted needs. And this, notwithstanding all the discussion of former years, for it is a mistake to suppose that the present movement is a novel torpe, nor that all that has been urged was not urged long years since.

What little good there has been done—what little redeeming "remnant," as Matthew Arnold would say, has been created—has been owing to very different means than those prepared by men who leave out of their calculations the power of the Gospel. Missions, reformatories, refuges, temperance societies, midnight meetings, and special services have met with encouraging success. The more reason, we say, that a proven method of regeneration should be developed. "But what does it all amount to?" cries one writer; "We are simply living in a fool's paradise if we suppose that all these agencies combined are doing a thousandth part of what needs to be done, a hundredth part of what *could* be done by the Church of Christ. We must face the facts; and these compel the conviction that—

"THIS TERRIBLE FLOOD OF SIN AND MISERY IS GAINING
UPON US."

CHAPTER II.

RESCUING THE PERISHING.

FIFTEEN years ago a gentleman, whose business brought him into the heart of the district described, had some of these hard truths brought home to him. He was well-known in the locality. The extensive brewery firm, in which his father was a partner, own prominent premises in the Mile End Road, their remarkable ladder and tall chimneys being recognised landmarks. Mr. Frederick N. Char-

rington saw about him on all sides the teeming flood of sin and misery, clad for the nonce in gaudy rags and revelling in besotten pleasure. He at once started a mission, in association with Mr. E. H. Kerwin, who has ever since been his most valuable friend and helper, watching the work with him at every step. Commencing in a very small way in a night school for boys, he afterwards joined other young men in a hay-loft. After a time Mr. Charrington became so strongly impressed with the conviction that the liquor traffic was the cause of a large proportion of the wickedness prevalent that he left the brewery, and so gave up the prospect of a large income. As years went on, however, his father died, and on his death bed assured his eldest son, not only of his warm affection, but hearty approval. In the will he offered him his share in the business, or else a sufficient fortune for his needs. It is that fortune which Mr. Charrington is now devoting to the poor, but it is our purpose to show that it is not sufficient to support so large an undertaking as that which his efforts have raised around him.

No doubt Mr. Charrington's secession from the brewery firm and his spirit of self-sacrifice, coupled with his relentless war against music hall immorality, have served him as his strongest weapons. Always at the helm he is necessarily popular—and popular to a high degree. It is not the intention here to detail the numerous successive steps which have placed him in the position he now occupies, and which many an ordained minister regards with admiration. How difficult it is to induce the people to attend public worship may be gathered from the fact that only two per cent. of the working-classes form part of regular congregations. Quoting from the "Bitter Cry," we learn that the result of investigations, carried on in the neighbourhood of Old Ford, inhabited for the most part by the respectable working class, showed that in 147 consecutive houses there were 212 families, 118 of which never, under any circumstances, went to a place of worship. Out of 2,290 persons living in consecutive houses at Bow Common, only 88 adults and 47 children ever attended, and 64 of these frequented a single mission hall. In one district, in St. George's-in-the-East, 39 persons were worshippers out of a population of 4,235.

Now, just imagine, if the large majority who now never darken the doors of churches or chapels were of one accord suddenly to demand admittance. Have we the seats or even the standing room to accommodate them? Statistics sufficiently prohibit an affirmative reply. In truth

THE BOAT IS NOT BIG ENOUGH.

And it was just this thought which guided and directed Mr. Charrington in all his plans. The idea was founded on fact for,

as Lord Shaftesbury asserts, there are at least 400,000 persons at the present time in the metropolis who would never have heard of the Word of God but for the agency of missions. And, indeed, the number might be much larger if the boats, *i.e.*, the mission halls, were only big enough.

In proof of this last statement, note the experience of success which Mr. Charrington, year by year, has gained.

As a result of his working amongst the juvenile thieves and rough lads, a self-supporting Boys' Home was opened in 1870 which is still in active operation. Many of the lads are sent to Great Yarmouth, to be employed on fishing smacks. Two years later a mission hall, to seat 600 persons, was erected in Carleton Square, and for three years it served as the head-quarters of the Tower Hamlets' Mission, of which it now forms a branch. An important site in the Mile End Road was next acquired, and cleared of dilapidated buildings. Here a tent was erected, and during the two following summers evangelistic services were conducted night after night. A still better site was afterwards purchased, and in order to lose no time, a large circular tent was put up and opened in May, 1876. Mr. Samuel Morley, M.P., in the chair, was well within the mark when he feared that more than one million of the population of London never enter a place of worship, and, if they did, 800,000 additional sittings would be required.

In 1877 a temporary building of brick, wood, and corrugated iron—being part of the Hall in which Messrs. Moody and Sankey held their services on their first visit to London—was substituted for the tent, and since that date it has formed one of the most noteworthy features of the Mile End Road, not on account of its beauty, for utility has supplanted that consideration, but principally by reason of its size, and of the sustained eagerness displayed by the crowds of East London to obtain admission.

The Great Assembly Hall, as it is called, has one distinguishing characteristic, a characteristic which it shares with no other public building of the kind in the Metropolis. For nearly seven years it has been

OPEN EVERY NIGHT ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

In all weathers, on week days and Sundays, in winter and summer, the building has never shut its doors. Three years since the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon wrote: "Just now the large hall is becoming dilapidated. Rows of umbrellas are put up during the meetings in wet weather, and in winter the cold is intense"—and then he added: "*The place is too small for the numbers willing to attend, and all things considered, the erection of a permanent building is absolutely necessary.*" Mr. Charrington has put the ground and building into

trust, and it is the wish of himself and friends to see a commodious building erected for the preaching of the Gospel. I fear they will not effect their purpose with less than £20,000. It is a large sum, but the needs of the East End demand great efforts. I sincerely hope the work will be carried out speedily."

Mr. Spurgeon hit the point when he said, "The place is too small." Although the Great Hall can hold 2,000 persons and the smaller Young Men's Hall adjoining will contain perhaps 500 more, on Sunday nights hundreds are turned away for want of room. Turned away! What does it mean? Something has constrained these souls to seek Salvation. Many are realizing their danger, and the danger of those dear to them. A devoted mother has rejoiced to find that the Spirit of God has softened the heart of her son, and she longs to take him where the good seed is sown. A weak and needy Christian wants strength and the encouragement given by the fellowship of members; an atheist feels some sudden and strange curiosity, to know whether "These people have anything new to say."

These are precious moments—moments which may occur only once in a man's lifetime. On whom does the responsibility lie if these erring ones returning to the fold are rejected, not from want of sympathy, not from want of love or of effort, but

FOR THE WANT OF ROOM!

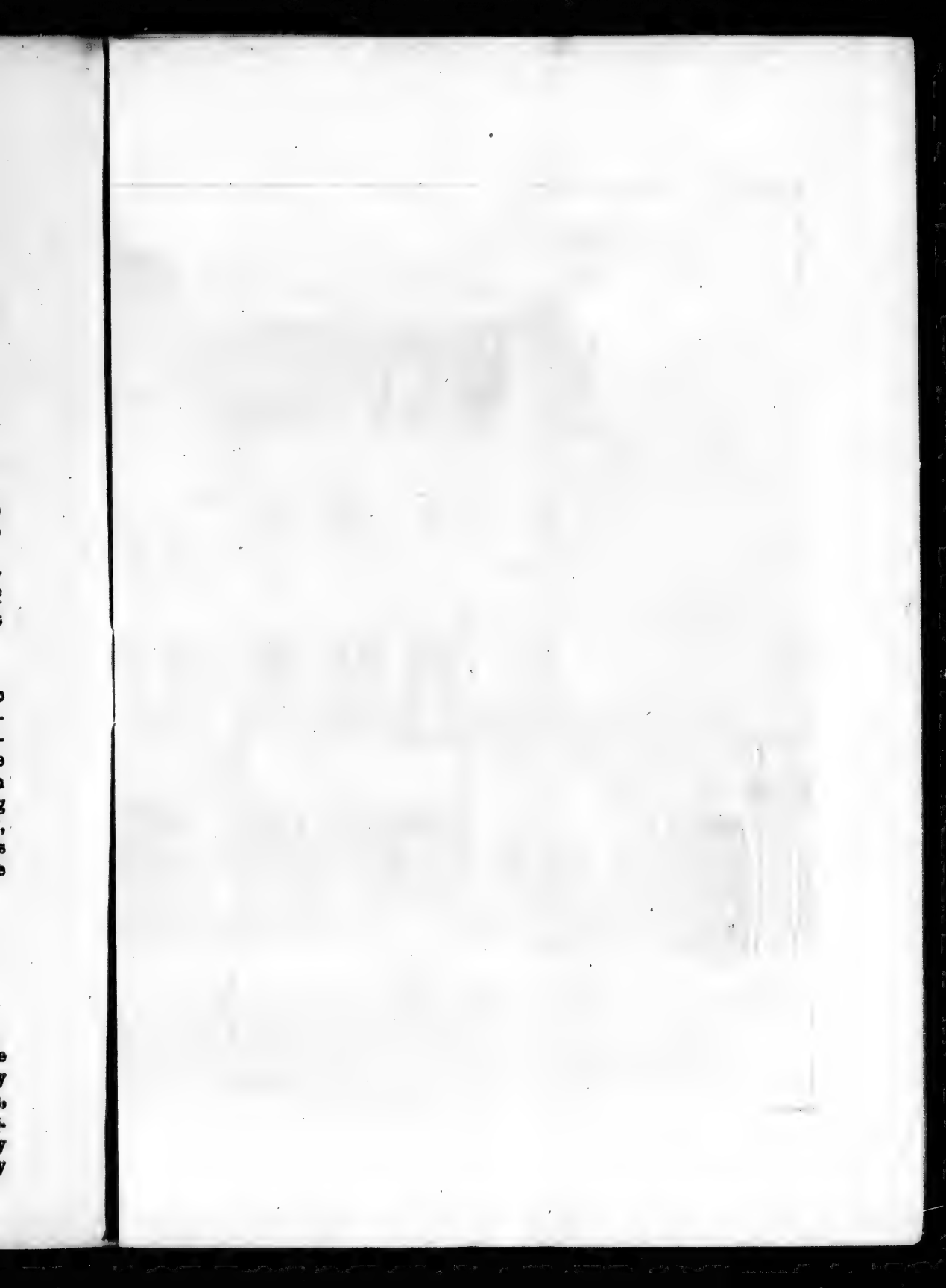
Yet another hard fact. During two winters an adjacent music hall, since burned down, was opened on Sunday nights simultaneously with the Great Assembly Hall, and the united congregations usually numbered 5,000 persons. Here is proof positive that a larger building is all that is wanted. Like the oarsman on the Thames at the time of the *Princess Alice* catastrophe, seeing the people around asking for admission in vain, Mr. Charrington, equally a volunteer in the work of rescuing the perishing, lifts up his heart to God and appeals to the public in the self-same words:

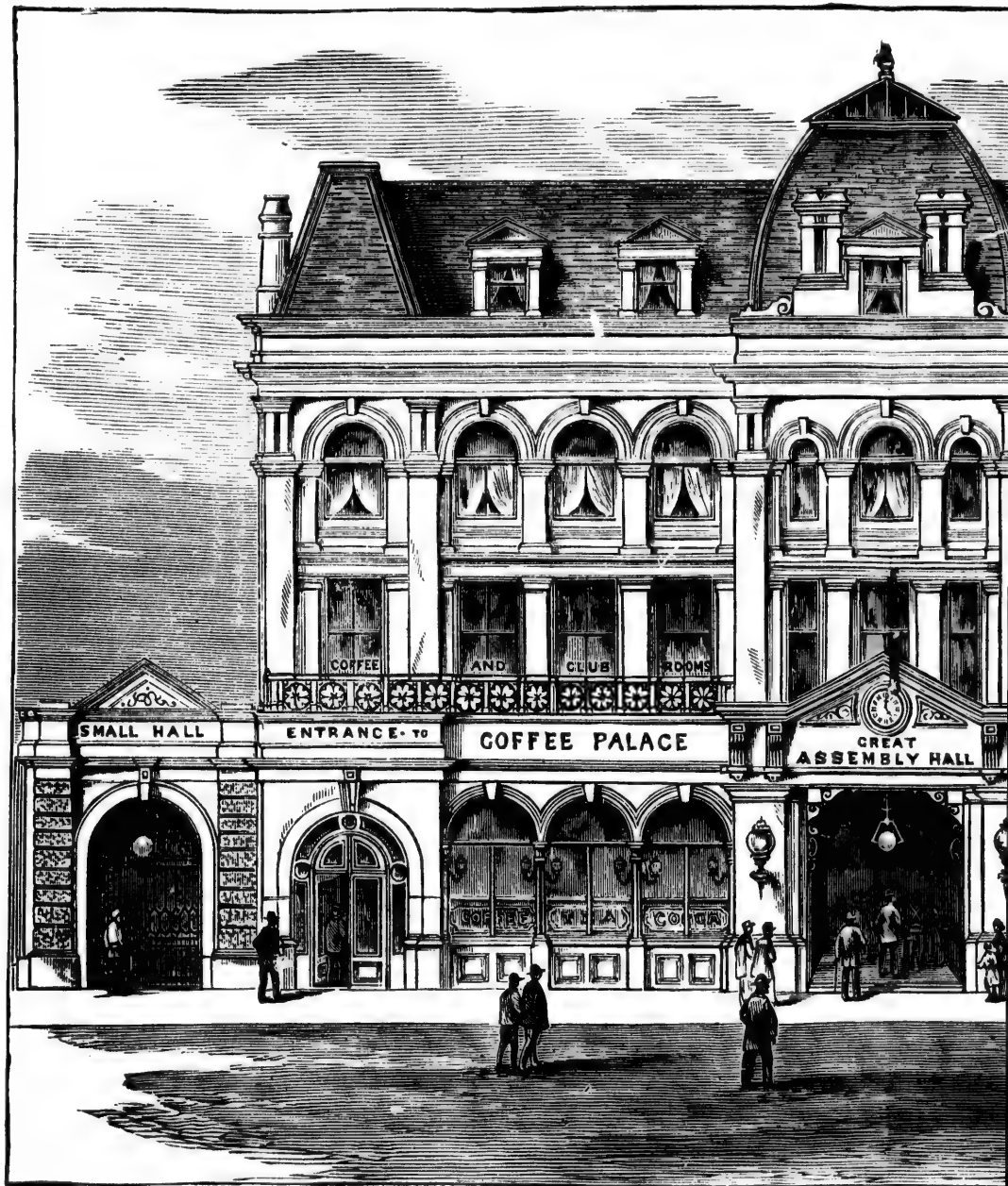
"OH! FOR A BIGGER BOAT!"

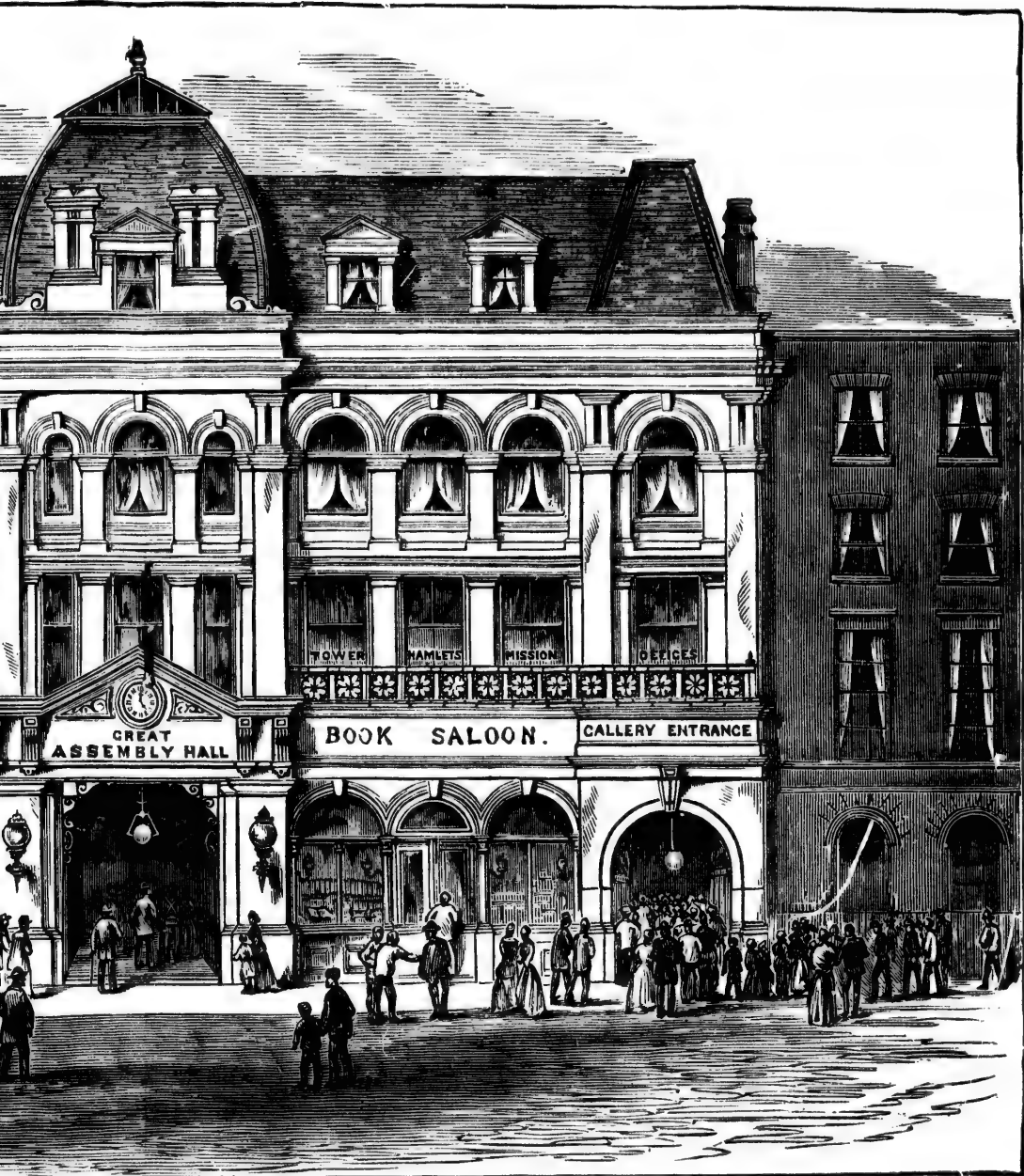
CHAPTER III.

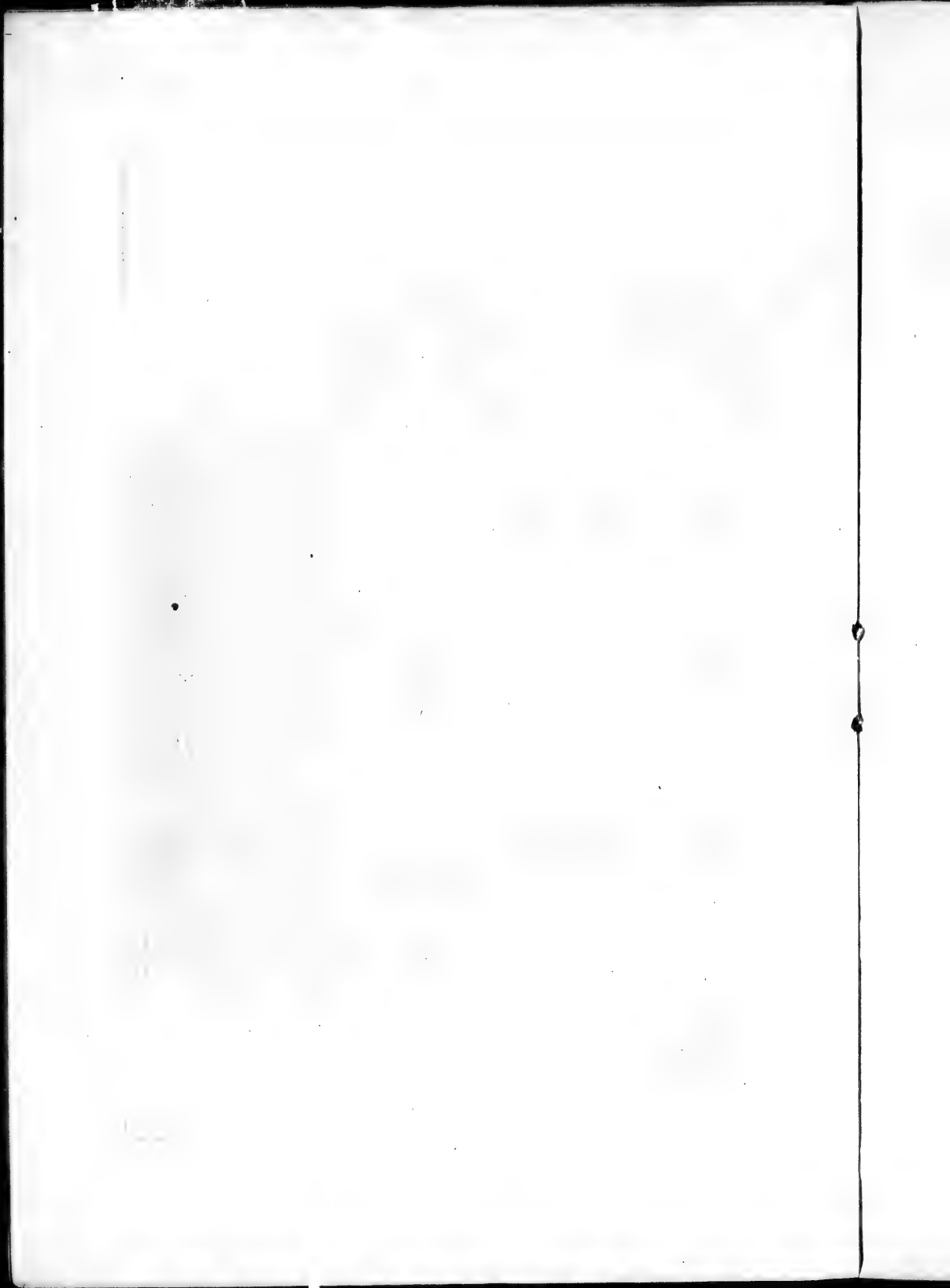
BUILDING THE BOAT.

HEN the need for a "Bigger Boat" was felt, immediate steps were taken towards building one. Twenty thousand pounds at first sight appeared a large sum, but steady and persevering effort soon reduced it. Already the site of the Hall has been paid for, costing nearly £8,000; and the smaller hall represents another £1,000, profitably









invested. Towards the £20,000 required for the new buildings, some £6,000 has been received or promised, so the special appeal now made is for less than £14,000. In the immediate past so large a sum as £14,000 has been actually contributed to the work, and surely the hon. supt. of the Tower Hamlets Mission may count upon the support of those who have the means to spare. One thing is certain: That every penny so given will, without deduction for "management expenses," "festival dinners," or "commission," find its way direct and intact to the object for which it is intended. Further, the regular attendants at the Hall—poor as they are—during last year contributed in small sums upwards of £300 to the Building Fund.

HOW IS THE MONEY TO BE EXPENDED?

In the first place, the £6,000 has been laid out in the erection of frontage buildings, covering a site 90 feet in width, and 40 feet in depth. In an illustration we give a view of these buildings, as seen from the Mile End Road. They comprise a spacious Coffee Palace, which will be self-supporting, and supply all the attractions of the public-house without the intoxicating drink; a Book Saloon, where pure literature is sold, counteracting the pernicious influences of the well-named "penny horrors;" and, on the three upper floors, various club-rooms and offices, Young Men's Christian Association and Young Women's Christian Association Rooms. Three fine entrances, one on either side and the third in the centre, will lead into a vestibule of octagonal shape, and of what is considered perfect design for the purpose, the number of exits being great.

Behind the vestibule will stand the New Hall, which is to hold nearly 5,000 persons. It is reasonably expected that on 'Sunday nights its accommodation will be none too ample. The Hall will have a height of nearly 50 feet in the clear; and a depth of 134 feet, the width being 70 feet. There are to be two galleries, with double platforms, and space for organ and choir. The ceiling is to be nearly flat for sound, with coved sides. The New Hall, apart from the frontage, may be put up for £13,650, provided that a tender, which has been sent in, can be accepted forthwith.

The foundation stones of the frontage were laid in November 1893, the Right Hon. the Earl of Shaftesbury, K.G., the President of the Mission, taking the chair. Over five hundred ladies and gentlemen, including many of the local clergy and ministers, witnessed the ceremony, in which the venerable earl himself, Lady Blanche Keith-Falconer, Miss Cory (of Cardiff), Mr. John Cory, Mr. George Williams, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Bevan, and Lady Hobart, and others took part. It may here be mentioned that all these ladies and gentlemen are liberal supporters of the work.

The funds are vested in eight trustees, who are as follows:—

MR. F. A. BEVAN.

MR. FREDK. N. CHARRINGTON.

MR. RICHARD CORY.

HON. ION KEITH-FALCONER.

MR. JAMES MATHIESON.

MR. SAMUEL MORLEY, M.P.

HON. HAMILTON TOLLEMACHE.

MR. JOSEPH WEATHERLEY.

The trust deed specifies the objects for which the Hall is to be used.

Mr. R. C. L. Bevan, who has promised £2,000, has consented to act as hon. treasurer. Lord Shaftesbury has frequently presided at the Anniversary Meetings of the Mission, which on Easter Monday forms in the East End a popular attraction.

MANNERS AND METHODS.

If a chance visit be paid to the Great Assembly Hall it will no doubt astonish many to find that the work therein carried on is quiet and sober. An impression seems to have got abroad that only noise and excitement, banners and processions, badges and titles, can create an impression upon the uncultured. The simple Gospel is the only agency which is relied upon by Mr. Charrington and his associates; and the visible success of his Mission is a clear proof that the Word of God needs no adventitious aids. Gospel preaching, prayer meetings, lectures, and services of song, comprise the whole aggressive programme, which is essentially evangelistic and unsectarian. Such a method is all sufficient and sensationalism is given no place.

An earnest effort is also made to reach the children, and the Sunday Schools forms an important branch of the Mission.

Commenting upon the orderly demeanour of those whom he addressed in the Great Assembly Hall, Lord Shaftesbury said: "When I look upon your behaviour, and the mode of action of those at the head of the Mission, I like it because it is sober and sedate; and not less on that account, profound and lasting. You will never satisfy them with singing, moral stories, little bits of ritualism, and a few texts, but go among the people with the true Gospel of Christ, and those who will receive it will receive fully—some will reject it, but those who do receive it will have received the fertilizing power of the Lord Jesus Christ and Him crucified. I look upon you all as so many appointed by God to carry on this great work, and I regard this Tower Hamlets Mission as worthy of all support. Its great success appears to me most assuredly, and to many others I am certain, like the voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord.'"

In brief, the Tower Hamlets Mission carries on a quiet work for God—

"Not marked by noise, but by success alone
Not known by bustle, but by useful deeds."

CHAPTER IV.

SOME OF THE SAVED.

WHEN a great national disaster is chronicled in the daily press, and when the dread words "Loss of Life" precede the reports, the reader's eye immediately seeks the "List of the Saved." The names of the dead in colliery explosions, railway accidents, or collisions at sea, have a mournful interest, but they cannot always be recorded, for some remains are never recovered, and some are never identified. And men, too, in the race of life, drop out of the contest and sink into the oblivion of death "unwept and unsung," and unnoticed withal! except by some second Mirza who sadly views the vacancies in the ranks as they occur. But on the other hand, when by some brave and heroic deed the lives of men are saved, the world weeps in admiration at the spectacle. Imprisoned miners released from a living tomb, the devotion of a Grace Darling, the rescue of a suffering shipwrecked crew, of these things the nation lives to be told. But it is not given to those who preach the Gospel always to know the power God has put into their words; yet there are instances where He permits the harvest to be reaped where the seed was sown, and the list of the spiritually saved brings much rejoicing to the heart of the Christian.

Among the records of the Tower Hamlets Mission are the following cases:—

At an Experience Meeting B. E.— testified:—I used to worship the publican, and thought there was no happiness outside his establishment. My poor wife and children had to suffer, and were often starving. I was a brickmaker then; I was employed in the gas works, and now I am a coal porter, and am all day long carrying two cwt. of coal upon my back, and this I do without a drop of drink. At one time I became so miserable, on account of my sins, that I determined to commit suicide. I used to go about in my dirty working clothes on Sunday, and then spend the day at Temple Mills.* I used to swear and get out of temper, but since I have been converted I do neither. Once, when I was in drink, I nearly strangled my wife, and she was saved only by the

* Temple Mills is a Sunday resort of Sabbath breakers in the East End.

neighbours coming in. From that time I swore I would not drink again, but I made the vow in my own strength, and when I got with my mates they said, "Oh, have one glass," and then I found I could not stop at one, and I took two, then three, and soon became as bad as ever again. But, bless God, since I was converted in the Assembly Hall my life has been a marvel. If you don't believe it ask my wife and children.

Another declared: W. S.— I have been a wicked sinner. I was brought up in sin. When only seven years old I used to play pitch and toss on Sundays. Up to the age of fifteen I went about the country stealing plough shares, which I would sell for old iron. I next joined the army, and after four years I left through ill health. I have been a great drunkard. When I gave up the army I took out a hawker's licence and went round to races and fairs. Then in the evenings I used to clog dance at the public houses. I have travelled with a boxing booth. I have also been a great burglar; anything I could lay my hand on I would take. I managed now and again to get a good situation, but left because I could not let things alone, and my conscience told me I was doing wrong. I have signed the pledge again and again, but never could keep it. I first got drunk at six years of age. I am well known as a big blackguard in the Whitechapel Road. A few weeks ago I might have been seen loafing about the streets drinking. Last July I was strolling down the Mile End Road, and I thought I would just go in and see what sort of place the Great Assembly Hall was. I had never been into the Hall. I went in, and stayed to the service. The preaching had little effect upon me. I was about leaving, when Mr. Kerwin placed his hand upon me and asked me kindly whether I was a Christian. I felt somehow I could not tell him a lie, and said, I was not. He then entered into conversation, and I wondered why he took so much notice of a dirty man with a ragged coat on. But, bless God, I understand it now. He asked me to go and have prayer with him, and I felt I could not refuse him. We went into the vestry, and I knelt down and soon I found myself crying to God for mercy, and, bless His name, that night he pardoned my sins, and since, oh, I cannot tell you, how happy I have felt, and how good the Lord has been. I was going into further sin that night if Mr. Kerwin had not have prevented me. I am thankful to say my wife, who has also been a dreadful character, soon after found peace. Having a lot of things that had been stolen, and pawn tickets of stolen goods, we took them out into the yard where we live and burned them all, and although I have had a hard struggle to get bread to eat, thank God, what we have had has been honestly earned. I shall bless God for this place as long

as I live, and so will my wife. (This man is now employed as a paid evangelist, and is doing a most successful work for God.)

A third (a Young Jew) said: "I first went to the Jews College at Norwood. I was there six years. I was taught Hebrew and English. I went to Germany to finish my education. I was afraid to go to church because I thought it was very wicked for a Jew. Some years ago I came back to England. I have often listened to street preaching, but only to mock, for which I am very sorry now. One night I came in here (the Great Assembly Hall) solely with the intention of making a disturbance, but I somehow got very interested in the service. Mr. Bennett (of the Evangelization Society) was preaching, and his subject was Hebrew Sacrifice, which was one I knew well from the Hebrew point, and as he went on I saw how much it tallied with the Christian. At the close of the service, I was asked to stay to the after meeting. Mr. Clifford and Mr. Bennett then explained to me some hard passages. We prayed together, and that night God saved me, and I am so happy now. I told my mother of it in German (she cannot speak English), and she thought I was joking, but at last saw I was in earnest, and she said I must leave her house. I had to do so, and if she knew where I was at work she would get me discharged, but, bless God, he has screened me up till now. The devil has done his best to get me back, but in God's hands I am safe. I ask your prayers for me, and my parent brother, and sisters."

As Mr. Charrington lives amongst the people he has the benefit of considerable local knowledge, and the phrase "The homes of the poor," of which so much has been heard of late, conveys to him something more than vague remembrances of painful descriptions of wretchedness and filth. The Homes of the Poor, in all their squalor, are to him stern realities. Within a stone's throw of the Great Assembly Hall, a family living in abject misery, were discovered. Ascending the rickety stairs and entering a squalid garret Mr. Charrington found a man who earned a precarious livelihood by selling farthing toys on the "Waste," where the street fair is held. He admitted that he lived in the corner of the wretched apartment with a woman to whom he had not been married; huddled in another corner were three or four children—their unfortunate offspring. But the greatest surprise was contained in the fact that in the same room dwelt a young woman who was stated to be a consistent attendant at the Great Assembly Hall. The man, depraved as he was, with tears in his eyes, spoke of the young girl in this way: "She's an angel, sir. Every night she reads the Bible and prays before going to sleep." It was quite true. The young woman had been changed in heart

by the power of the Gospel, and her sole reason for remaining in this abode of vice was, that her influence should prevent the woman who lived with the man, from sinking into still greater depths of degradation. That woman was her mother!

One of the cases which determined the provision of the Boys' Home is thus related: At the close of one of the meetings a little fellow was found sobbing. With some difficulty he was induced to tell his tale. It was simple. His widowed mother, his sisters, and he all lived in one room. Everything had been sold to buy bread except two white mice; but at last they, too, must go! With the proceeds he bought street songs, which, having retailed on the "Waste," he obtained the means of getting more bread for his mother and sisters. Now they were completely destitute. The lad was accompanied home. *Home!* It was a wretched attic, in one of the most dilapidated backs. The day was wretchedly cold and dismal. In the broken-down grate the dead embers of yesterday's handful of firing remained. On the table a piece of newspaper, held a few crumbs. The atmosphere was close, and the stench insupportable. "My good woman," said Mr. Charrington, "Why don't you open the window." "Oh!" she replied, "You would not say that if you had had nothing to eat, and had no fire to warm you."

Many hundreds of lads have passed through the Home. Among them was a boy who had lighted upon a big hole beneath a flagstone. Here he used to sleep concealed at night, getting his living during the day by selling matches, and holding horses. Another boy had no home, and at night-fall, worn out, he crept among the shrubs of suburban gardens, resting until dawn again bade him—a second Jo!—"move on."

Of the immorality of the lowest classes, it is impossible to speak with any degree of freedom. A solicitor, practising at a London Police Court, and getting most of his clients among the poor, recently stated that he was accustomed to hear day after day tales which would shock and startle those even who imagined that they had probed the depths of human depravity. Mr. Charrington has not shut his eyes to the truth, and has rescued many fallen girls by placing them in homes, whence they enter domestic service, many of them afterwards leading honest lives. Several young women have sworn in Courts of Justice that they have been drugged in the Music Halls. Standing at the door of one of these establishments, watching one of the most fearful sights which London presents, a drunken, cursing crowd, pouring into the highway and spending the last of their money in immorality—a man was suddenly thrown into Mr. Charrington's arms. He was noisy and drunk. He was the keeper of a brothel, and shaking

his flat at the Music Hall touts, he said: "This is how they treat me—ME, one of their best customers—turned out!" On being asked for an explanation, he added that every night he took a certain number of girls to the place, and these poor unfortunates were wont to waste much money in bottles of champagne, to which they were "treated" by the swells that came, not from the East but the West End! The man invited Mr. Charrington to visit one of his "girls" who was dying. He went, and soon became aware that it was a poor unfortunate who had never refused the little books which had been offered her when passing the Hall, and, in consequence, bore the name of "Eternity Sal." She was stretched on a bed of the most horrible description, and was literally being starved to death. She could have as much drink as she pleased, but no food. Of no further use, she had best to die! Respectful enough in the presence of a stranger, the associates of the dying girl crowded round the pallet, but so soon as he was gone they commenced drinking ardent spirits and singing ribald songs, until at last Death came and put an end to her sufferings.

But Mr. Charrington's visit resulted in the rescue of two girls from the house, and the man, with his wife, was induced to abandon his shameful calling.

At exceptional periods of distress operations on a large scale have been undertaken to feed the famished. The sight of a man whilst waiting at the Dock Gates, stooping to pick up a piece of orange peel which he greedily ate, emphasised the duty of providing for the starving. In a short season of six weeks £700 was expended in the purchase of bread and cocoa alone. There was no imposition. Fourteen hundred and fifty people sat down in the Assembly Hall at one time. Most distressing incidents occurred. One man eat a loaf and a half of bread; another dropped down in a dead faint on the threshold; a third—starving—was overcome with the sudden abundance of food, and was carried off insensible, and apparently lifeless, to the London Hospital.

Latterly, in conjunction with the Local Clergy, an effort has been made to transfer many out of employment to Australia, Canada, and other colonies, open to receive emigrants. It is found that the people are willing to go. Labourers, with their wives and families, are sent out. In most cases, the sole outlay is 30s. to £2 per head, assisted passages. "It is only a matter of £2," said the Honorary Superintendent to one poor man, "between wretchedness and misery, and plenty and happiness." "Yes, Sir," answered the man in tones of deep despair, "That is all."

Needless to say, the necessary couple of sovereigns were forthcoming from the Emigration Fund.

On both sides of the Atlantic a crisis of identical character is predicted, and a crisis which must end in anarchy, revolution, and blood is being precipitated. Whether these be alarmist fears or not, those who labour amongst the poor, and who attend their club meetings and analyze the advice tendered them by professional agitators, can affirm that the hour of difficulty is not far ahead. But there is no better way of reaching the hearts of the masses, and bringing them under humanizing influences, than the preaching of the Gospel. Hence it is with confidence that Mr. Fredk. N. Charrington, the Honorary Superintendent of the Tower Hamlets Mission (whose aim it is to go to the suffering masses in this poverty-stricken part of East London, and proclaim to them the hope of salvation in its widest extent—deliverance from moral evil here, and perfect salvation hereafter), appeals to the public for help.

Donations (large or small) will be thankfully received by

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